

tation is marred by the peculiarities of the authors' English, and by numerous misprints.

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McDougall, W. *Is America Safe for Democracy? Six Lectures given at the Lowell Institute of Boston.* New York, Scribner's 1921. Pp. viii; 218.

PROF. MCDUGALL does not allow the grass to grow under his feet. It is barely a year since his big volume on the *Group Mind* appeared, and he has already followed it up with what is perhaps best regarded as a popularization of his previous argument, backed up with a poignant appeal to the American people. As he watches "the American nation speeding gaily, with invincible optimism, down the road to destruction," he seems to himself "to be contemplating the greatest tragedy in the history of mankind," because "if the American nation should go down, whence may we expect a new birth of progress?" This sounds like flattery, but is probably true. It is however considerably less than the whole truth. The whole of civilization is in danger of destruction, owing to its gravely dysgenic organisation and the folly and ignorance of its rulers; but of all civilised communities America is the least likely, and will presumably be the last, to go under. Her resources are so great that she can afford to play the fool to an enormous extent, and has the power to ruin the rest of the world before she ruins herself. Unfortunately experience has shewn that she is by no means the least likely of civilized states to play the fool; for owing to the defects of her political constitution, foresight, continuity, and intelligent direction in her policy are almost impossible. She has recently thrown away incomparably the greatest opportunity any people ever had of imposing her will on the world and of determining the whole future of mankind; it is most improbable that such an opportunity will recur, or that America will be found capable of taking the lead in the arduous struggle for eugenical self-selection which can alone arrest the biological decay of 'civilized' humanity.

It is therefore to be feared that Prof. McDougall's appeal to America to save mankind will fall upon deaf ears. But this is not to say that his argument is not excellent and forcible. He adduces convincing evidence to show that men are *not* equal, that the differences between the better types and the worse are congenital and heritable, and that a social order which persistently breeds from the inferior elements of the human race must decline and perish. On all these points there is scarcely any difference of opinion among scientific eugenicists. And they are the vital points, which it is necessary to impress upon the mind and conscience of mankind, with unwearying reiteration.

Compared with these the points in Prof. McDougall's book to which exception can be taken shrink into insignificance. I think myself that not infrequently he tries to extract too definite conclusions from very fragmentary evidence. For example, though he tries to hold the balance even between the mythologists of a chosen race, and the 'race-slumpers,' who reduce 'race' to a subjective emotion like 'nationality,' and insists on the scientific view that European populations are all mixed out of the same ingredients ('Nordic,' 'Mediterranean' and

'Alpine') in not very different proportions, he yet tries to correlate certain mental qualities with a certain racial descent and to show that curiosity, independence, 'strength of will,' 'Gothic' art, 'romantic' literature, and a tendency to divorce and suicide are connected with a predominance of 'Nordic' blood. But this is a relapse into 'race' mythology, and frankly, I cannot say that the proof seems to me adequate. Prof. McDougall is perhaps entitled to say that 'modern science is very largely a product of Northern Europe where the 'Nordic' blood predominates' (p. 79); but he then remembers 'the Greeks who founded philosophy and Science.' So he has to declare that they 'were probably, in their great age compounded of the Nordic and the Mediterranean races,' and that the Romans, who took no interest, in philosophy and science 'were almost purely Mediterranean.' It may be so, but it is precisely the mode of reasoning by which Gobineau and H. S. Chamberlain attributed all greatness to an infusion of 'Teutonic' blood. And if the Romans were 'almost purely Mediterranean,' what business had they to exhibit the 'Nordic' quality of 'strength of will' in so superlative a fashion? Prof. McDougall should remember also that 'Gothic' art arose in France, by no means a very 'Nordic' country (though probably more so in the Middle Ages), and that the frequency of divorce and suicide is far more easily correlated with economic conditions and religion than with 'race,' though he might of course retort that these in turn depend upon the latter. His appeal moreover to the eye to support the reason, by three illustrations, of a low-grade negro, a Malay chief, and Abraham Lincoln, would seem to be fallacious. Were they to prove the existence of superior *men* or of superior *races*? It proves little to show that some men of some races are visibly superior to some men of others, and there ought to have been at least six illustrations, of a superior and of an inferior type from each race.

However, the logical fallaciousness of the argument from race is really situated deeper down. (1) If all existing populations are mixed, we are not in a position to argue that their present qualities are identifiable with those of the 'races' that went to their making. Their present make-up may be a consequence of the *mixing*. (2) It seems logically precarious to argue from the achievements of genius to the normal capacity of the stock in which the genius has taken birth. As William James has definitely shown, genius is too much of a windfall or 'gift of the gods' to be predictably connected with average mentality; and yet the discoveries and inventions that made civilization possible and progressive were always the works of genius. Hence they can be credited to 'race' as little as the genius itself. (3) It seems fallacious to attribute self-reliant and protestant* character to Nordic man without observing that this implies as its correlate submissiveness in Nordic woman, and consequently *both* qualities in the children; moreover, if 'the individualized family home' or 'castle' is one of the Nordic's 'peculiar contributions to the culture of the world' (p. 81), may not as much and more be said of the Oriental's *harim*?

*In France, however, the Protestants are mostly in the South. (Cp. p. 102, which also attributes Calvin to Switzerland.)

But after all it is not very profitable to dispute about the past and the relative merits of existing stocks. From an eugenical standpoint they are all simply raw material out of which a really superior race may possibly be fashioned. And what it really concerns us to know is how this may be accomplished. To this problem Prof. McDougall contributes his old suggestion of a salary bonus to married men with children. His suggestion is a good one, so far as it goes, but he would be the last to imagine that in itself it provided an adequate solution. Moreover the mere financing of his plan would require sums so large that they *could* be got only by cutting down armaments; and the will to do this would alone imply a revolution in human sentiment almost as radical as the will to reconstruct human nature demanded by eugenics. And neither the one nor the other is the sort of revolution we are likely to get.

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